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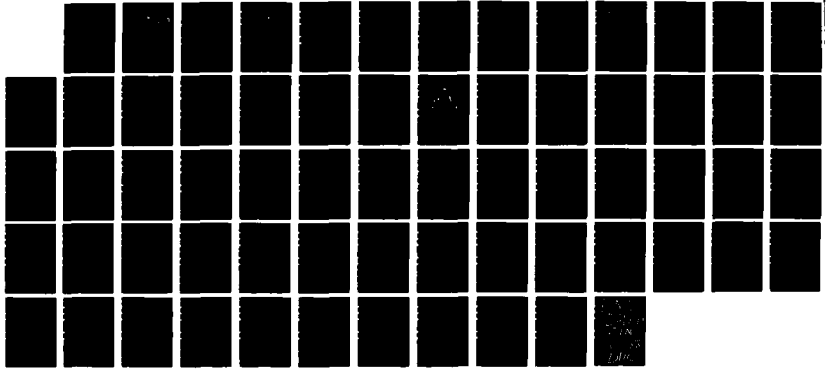

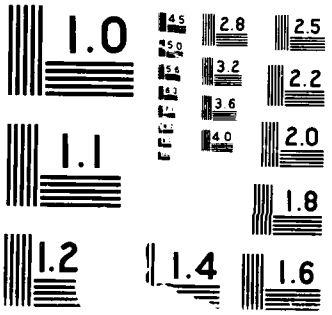
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# AIR COMMAND AND STAFF COLLEGE

## STUDENT REPORT

APPLYING THE
SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP THEORY
TO THE USAF OFFICER TRAINING SCHOOL

Major Jon D. Cooley 88-0595
Major Larry R. Walker

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TITLE APPLYING THE SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP THEORY TO THE USAF OFFICER TRAINING SCHOOL

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Submitted to the faculty in partial fulfillment of requirements for graduation.

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This study describes Hersey and Blanchard's Situational Leadership Theory (SLT), and proposes that it can be integrated into the structure of the USAF Officer Training School. The purpose is to provide the OTS flight commander with a formal way to assess an officer trainee's development level and then apply an appropriate leadership behavior. The study provides specific leader actions/techniques to use in five major training areas where flight commanders and officer trainees have direct involvement/contact.

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# PREFACE

At the USAF Officer Training School (OTS), the mandate for strong, effective leadership is clear. The flight commanders at OTS have the toughest job at the school--and certainly the most significant job in terms of consequences for the Air Force. They are the primary role models for the officer trainee, and have the responsibility to train, counsel, evaluate potential, and make the decision on a trainee's commissionability. They do a good job, as evidenced by the high-quality second lieutenants commissioned every 3 weeks, which represents approximately 40 percent of the USAF officer corps yearly (19:--).

Before they can assume their duties, flight commanders must complete a 5-week Initial Qualification Training (IQT) course. They're taught and evaluated in classroom lecture procedures, drill (marching), and sports officiating. They also learn certain related administrative functions. However, they're never taught how to "act." That is, how should they relate to the officer trainee in this unique training environment? What should the flight commanders' actions/behaviors be toward the trainee as he or she progresses through the 12-week training program? These behaviors are, for the most part, learned on-the-job--and they're not always appropriate.

This study proposes that a formal approach is needed, and suggests that Hersey and Blanchard's Situational Leadership Theory (SLT) provides the basis for that approach. This study describes the OTS environment and SLT and illustrates how they can be linked together to assess the trainees' development skills and provide specific leader behaviors in response to the trainees' specific needs.

The behaviors and techniques recommended in this study are drawn from the authors' total 6 years of experience as members of the OTS staff. Both authors have served as flight commanders and their combined assignments at OTS included: squadron operations officer, squadron commander, curriculum area manager, Executive Officer for the OTS Commander, and Chief, OTS Officer Orientation Division. The recommendations made here are also based on the authors' years of observing and supervising flight commanders. Moreover, most of the behaviors and techniques recommended have been used with success by the authors and other flight commanders.

The authors wish to express thanks to the OTS Commander and Staff for their unselfish assistance, ideas and suggestions, and tolerance as this study was compiled. It is our hope that this study can be used as a springboard to implement a formalized approach to leader behaviors/techniques at OTS.



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# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

MAJOR JON D. COOLEY, USAF

Major Cooley served as a member of the OTS staff from 1983 to 1987. His duties at OTS included: flight commander, squadron operations officer, squadron commander, and Chief, OTS Officer Orientation Division. He holds a Bachelor of Journalism from the University of Texas at Austin and a Master of Science degree in Operations Management from the University of Arkansas. Major Cooley is a graduate of Squadron Officer School and Air Command and Staff College.

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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REPORT NUMBER 88-0595

AUTHOR(S) MAJORS JON D. COOLEY, AND LARRY R. WALKER, USAF

TITLE APPLYING THE SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP THEORY TO THE USAF OFFICER TRAINING SCHOOL (OTS)

I. Purpose: To establish Paul Hersey and Kenneth H. Blanchard's Situational Leadership Theory (SLT) as a basis for leadership styles/behaviors by the flight commander at OTS.

II. Problem: The Officer Training School operates on the ''leadership laboratory'' concept--officer trainees learn by doing. Flight commanders provide guidance, counsel, evaluate potential, and are the primary role models for the trainees. Yet no formal leadership program exists to help the flight commander be an even more effective leader in this unique training environment.

III. Data: Presently, flight commanders formulate their leadership styles/behaviors by a variety of methods. They attend Initial Qualification Training (IQT). Each prospective flight commander must complete IQT before assuming flight commander duties. They learn classroom lecture procedures, drill, sports officiating, and they have the opportunity to watch experienced flight commanders at work. They also learn from their officemates, but no requirement is levied to discuss leadership techniques unique to the OTS environment. Additionally, there is no guarantee officemates have developed

effective techniques they could pass on to a new flight commander. Further, prospective flight commanders come to OTS from many different Air Force career fields--very often, what worked for them there is not appropriate in the unique OTS training environment. Once a flight commander has established a leadership style which he or she is comfortable with, trends show they don't generally change, even though critiques may indicate a need to modify behavior to fit specific situations. This is where SLT could fit into the OTS program. In fact, this theory is taught to the trainees at OTS. The theory is based primarily on the maturity level of the follower; maturity in the sense of the follower's ability and willingness to accomplish a specific task. Depending on a follower's job knowledge, experience (ability); and motivation or commitment (willingness), he or she is categorized on a continuum from low, to moderate, to high maturity. To illustrate the application of appropriate leader responses to specific maturity levels, the bulk of this study is dedicated to specific behaviors and techniques flight commanders can use to personally display the four primary leadership styles described by SLT. In particular, this study will address five major areas in which flight commanders and trainees are directly involved: room maintenance, office reporting procedures, drill (marching), classroom procedures, and feedback/documentation procedures. For each of these major areas, this study lists a different set of leader behaviors and techniques specific to the four phases of trainee development, from fourth class (low maturity) through first class (high maturity).

IV. Conclusion: Hersey and Blanchard's model can provide a framework through which flight commanders can look at the trainee as he or she progresses through the various stages of the OTS program, assess his or her maturity, and then apply an appropriate leader response.

V. Recommendations: OTS should accept the Situational Leadership Theory as the basis for a comprehensive leadership training program for flight commanders. This program should begin with instruction in the theory during the OTS Initial Qualificication Training Course for flight commanders and include a handbook of techniques drawn from this report. In addition, regular refresher training sessions should be held at no less than 3-week intervals during each OTS class. These refresher sessions should be structured to allow all flight commanders carrying flights in the same class to review and discuss leadership techniques applicable to their students' current levels of training.

Chapter One

# THE PROBLEM

Officer Training School (OTS) flight commanders do not receive effective training in leadership styles, behaviors, and techniques. As a result, all flight commanders are not as effective as they could be if they did receive adequate leadership training. This chapter proves these statements by first explaining why strong flight commander leadership is important for the effective training of OTS officer trainees. It then outlines what kind of training new flight commanders receive during the OTS Initial Qualification Training (IQT) program and explains why leadership training is not currently part of IQT. This section then examines and evaluates the informal means flight commanders have to develop their leadership skills despite the absence of training in IQT. Finally, this section looks at the effectiveness of existing feedback systems flight commanders can use to evaluate and improve their leadership skills.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF LEADERSHIP

Strong leadership from flight commanders is important because they play the most vital role in the training of OTS students. This role is best understood by first looking at the mission of OTS. As stated in ATCP 33-1, A Head Start on OTS, "[OTS] is an intensive 12-week program that commissions only qualified men and women who measure up to Air Force standards.... OTS guides officer trainees through an orderly transition to commissioned service and teaches them the fundamental military knowledge and skills needed for effective performance" (3:3). For students to "measure up" they must face many challenges: academics, sports, positions in the student-run training wing, and for many, adjustment to an entirely new way of life. However, possibly the greatest challenge students face is that of becoming a leader. As ATCP 33-1 points out, "OTS is, above all, a leadership laboratory. Air Force officers are expected to be leaders..." (3-5). So clearly, OTS students have much to accomplish in the 12 weeks of the OTS program, but they also have someone to help them meet their challenges, their flight commanders.

The challenges OTS flight commanders face may be as great as those facing their students. Just looking at the job description block of a flight commander's OER reveals the responsibilities they

face. In part, a flight commander's job description reads, "Commands flights consisting of approximately 18 officer trainees. Conducts precommissioning training, evaluation, and counseling. Instructs over 80 academic hours.... Instills/evaluates officer qualities and serves as the primary role model for officer trainees. Has responsibility for the quality of those selected for commissioned service" (21:Block II). So clearly, flight commanders play an important role in the training of students. In fact, the importance of the flight commander in the OTS program is even more clearly revealed in Entrance to Excellence: A Handbook for OTS Flight Commanders:

> ...OTS is a continuous leadership laboratory central to which is the role of the flight commander. As the [flight commander]...,YOU are the primary training unit at OTS....YOU are responsible for the training, performance, morale, welfare and motivation of each member of YOUR flight....Without exception, your officer trainees will identify more closely with you than with any other officer they meet while at OTS (17:1).

Obviously, the mandate for leadership for OTS flight commanders is both clear and strong. As the primary role models for their students, flight commanders must be able to display the best attributes of officership. Since students spend more time with their flight commanders than with any other officers at OTS, they model much of their behavior after their flight commanders. They learn things as simple as how to wear their uniforms and how to march to things as complex and intangible as military bearing, values, and leadership. It's certainly not surprising that the axiom flight commanders use to describe their responsibilities puts leadership first: "...lead, train, motivate, and...evaluate" (17:2).

With leadership certainly being central to flight commander effectiveness, one would expect them to receive extensive leadership training as part of their qualification program for flight commander duty. Unfortunately, they do not.

## INITIAL QUALIFICATION TRAINING

IQT is a 3 to 5-week program designed to ready newly-arrived officers for their duties as flight commanders. IQT is governed by OTSR 52-1, Faculty Development, and contains about 120 hours of instruction. IQT must be completed before a new flight commander can take responsibility for a flight of officer trainees. Significantly though, of the 120 hours of instruction, only 6 hours are dedicated to leadership training (15:--). However, these hours are spent reviewing the leadership instruction taught to OTS students. The fact is, flight commanders get only 1 hour of leadership instruction

directly applicable to their duties. This instruction is presented during an "OTS Philosophy" IQT lesson; however, even the IQT course manager describes the lesson as "fairly vague" (20:--). But if leadership is so important, why isn't it effectively taught in IQT?

Part of the reason why flight commander leadership is not extensively covered in IQT is simply the great amount of information the IQT program already covers. Flight commanders are responsible for over 80 hours of instruction. Moreover, much of what they teach is new to new flight commanders, meaning they have to learn it before they can teach it. In other words, even without leadership training, IQT gives flight commanders a large amount to learn and a short time in which to learn it. For example, new flight commanders must learn how to teach drill. Since most officers haven't marched since they graduated from their commissioning sources, new flight commanders not only have to relearn how to march, they have to learn how to teach it as well. Another good example is the game of flickerball. Flickerball was designed to be complex and frustrating, a game requiring detailed knowledge of many rules. Many new flight commanders have either never played the game or haven't played it in years. So they not only have to learn how to play flickerball, they have to learn the game well enough to be able to officiate as well. Even more, many new flight commanders have no experience as instructors. They have to start from scratch to learn how to teach lessons in the OTS academic program. Adding to the difficulty of learning drill, flickerball, and classroom instruction procedures is the fact that flight commanders are regularly evaluated in these areas by the Evaluation Branch of the OTS Analysis/Eval Division. In effect, these evaluations are like "check rides" pilots undergo. Moreover, new flight commanders must pass these "check rides" before they can teach unsupervised. Naturally, the motivation to do well causes new flight commanders and the IQT program to center a lot of attention and time in these areas. In short, IQT students are very busy learning the basic skills necessary to be able to do their jobs; not much time is left for anything else.

Another reason flight commander leadership isn't formally taught at OTS is the fact that leadership is a very personal and widely interpreted characteristic. Coming up with a standard definition of leadership is difficult; developing a program to tell flight commanders how to be good leaders is even more challenging. The authors' years of experience on the OTS staff provided opportunities to observe many flight commanders use several different leadership styles. Certainly, each flight commander believed he or she was using the most appropriate style. Nevertheless, some flight commanders proved to be consistently more successful than others, as indicated by student end-of-course critiques, the number of students they motivated to earn distinguished graduate status, the overall success record of their flights, etc. Moreover, the consistently successful flight commanders showed a set of common leadership behaviors and techniques.

Therefore, an objective study, such as this report, based on sound leadership theory and listing specific leadership techniques and behaviors directly applicable to the OTS environment, could certainly be very helpful to new flight commanders. A program such as this could tell flight commanders "what to do" to be good leaders. However, until now, no such study has existed. Nevertheless, despite the lack of formal instruction in IQT, new flight commanders eventually display their own styles of leadership, either good or bad. For most though, the effectiveness of their leadership styles depends on how they were developed.

## HOW FLIGHT COMMANDERS DEVELOP LEADERSHIP STYLES

Eventually, every flight commander must provide leadership to his or her officer trainees. The demands of the OTS program are such that students must be led, they must be directed by their flight commanders to complete the requirements of the program. To illustrate, flight commanders teach classes, inspect students and student rooms, and counsel students concerning poor performance, such as measurement failures or excessive demerits. They also grade briefings, letters, and drill evaluations, and rate students on effectiveness reports. Therefore, by playing such an involved and direct role with students, flight commanders inevitably provide leadership. Moreover, for many flight commanders, whether the leadership they provide is good or bad largely depends on how they developed their leadership styles.

The methods flight commanders have to develop their leadership styles are very limited. A few flight commanders develop their leadership styles all on their own. They come up with leadership styles by applying their own abilities and experiences to the OTS environment. However, while this may work for some, most flight commanders enter into what actually amounts to an informal leadership OJT program. This program starts during IQT as new flight commanders are assigned to observe experienced flight commanders teach classes, inspect rooms, officiate games, supervise leadership exercises, etc. They learn a lot about how to act like a flight commander by watching others. Later, after graduating from IQT and picking up their first flights, they continue their "OJT" by observing their "office buddies." Office buddies are experienced flight commanders carrying flights in the same classes and squadrons as new flight commanders. New flight commanders share offices with their office buddies (22:1). Here too, new flight commanders learn a lot about leading trainees by observing and interacting with their office buddies. While it may be true that these methods of developing leadership may be fairly effective, each method also has significant drawbacks.

Each method flight commanders are currently using to develop their abilities to effectively lead their trainees has important limitations. If flight commanders develop their leadership styles on

their own, they may develop a style inconsistent with the nature of the training program. Certainly, knowledge of the task at hand and of the people who have to accomplish the task is important in the development of an effective leadership style. If new flight commanders develop their styles on their own, they may not have the experience or information necessary to develop the correct styles. Even depending on the guidance of other flight commanders and an office buddy isn't always the panacea. Most of the learning from these methods comes from observing the behavior of others. Moreover, no specific requirement exists directing office buddies, or anyone else, to discuss leadership techniques and styles with new flight commanders. In fact, the quality of the leadership styles developed through the office buddy program directly depends on the aggressiveness of the new and/or experienced flight commanders in getting or transmitting information about effective leadership behavior. Even with open communication concerning leadership, new flight commanders at best get a one-sided view from their office buddies. In other words, if a new flight commander's office buddy is using an inappropriate leadership style, then the new flight commander may use the wrong style as well. Nevertheless, despite all the hinderances to developing an effective leadership style, flight commanders, as mentioned before, eventually do display certain styles of leadership. However, these styles don't have to remain static. Fortunately, several feedback systems are in place at OTS to help flight commanders judge the effectiveness of their leadership and make adjustments when necessary. Unfortunately though, as the next section will show, these feedback systems are all too often underused.

## FEEDBACK SYSTEMS

The existing feedback systems at OTS could be valuable tools to enable flight commanders to refine their leadership styles if they were used to their full advantage. For example, when students are recommended for elimination from training by their flight commanders, many meet faculty boards to have their cases reviewed. The results of faculty board proceedings are published after each board; however, the results are not disseminated to all flight commanders (5:4). This is unfortunate because flight commanders could learn a lot by understanding what their peers did right or wrong concerning students who met boards. Another good source of feedback is the student end-of-course critique system. This system is outlined in OTSR 53-3, Student Critique Program. The system features both computer-scored and hand-written critiques and the critiques are administered to each class. These critiques are exceptionally good because trends show up after only a few classes. However, OTS has no formal system or policy to use critiques to enhance flight commander leadership effectiveness. Granted, good and bad by-name critiques are forwarded to group and squadron commanders and to the flight commanders named in the critiques. But these critiques aren't disseminated to all flight commanders to give

them an opportunity to learn from the actions of their peers. Moreover, in the absence of a formal system that uses critiques to help enhance leadership effectiveness, sending critiques only to flight commanders named in the critiques is not always effective. In fact trends show flight commanders generally don't change their leadership styles, even after seeing evidence indicating a need for change. A review of the student end-of-course critiques on three flight commanders provides an example. This review covered three consecutive classes in which these flight commanders carried flights and recorded the percentage of students in each flight who indicated dissatisfaction on questions measuring aspects of their flight commander's leadership. The questions tracked on the critiques were: "Used the proper balance of positive and negative reinforcement.... Explained the standards against which I was evaluated" and "Provided timely feedback on my status in training" (14:Part I). Remarkably and unfortunately, dissatisfaction concerning these questions ranged from 30 to 70 percent for each flight commander and for each class (14:--). In other words, even though these critiques clearly indicated a need for change in leadership behavior, no change was made.

## CONCLUSION

Strong flight commander leadership is vitally important to effectively train OTS students. As the most significant role model for officer trainees, a flight commander's leadership makes a significant and lasting impact on students. However, due to the great amount of information and activities new flight commanders must learn during IQT and the difficulty in developing a generally accepted set of flight commander leadership techniques and behaviors, not much attention is given to teaching leadership to flight commanders. This lack of training leads to new flight commanders coming up with leadership styles based on their own skills and experiences, and usually colored by observing other flight commanders and officemates. Nevertheless, leadership styles don't necessarily remain static, and several feedback systems are in place at OTS to give flight commanders information on the effectiveness of their leadership techniques. Unfortunately though, these systems are not being used to their fullest advantage.

In essence then, the problem with flight commander leadership at OTS is that flight commanders aren't trained in leadership theories, techniques, and behaviors that will be effective in the OTS environment. The next section of this paper will outline the Situational Leadership Theory (SLT), a theory currently being taught to officer trainees by the OTS Academic Instruction Division. It will then explain how this theory can be specifically applied to OTS students and flight commanders. In other words, the next section offers a solution to the problem.

Chapter Two

# THE SOLUTION: SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP THEORY

As shown in Chapter One, flight commanders at OTS receive training in every aspect of their duties except one: leadership. Very little time is spent on developing appropriate leadership behavior as it should be applied over the range of the OTS 12-week program. Paul Hersey and Kenneth H. Blanchard's Situational Leadership Theory (SLT) fits solidly into the OTS program and can be applied to any stage of training at OTS. The success of SLT is dependent on the leader's accurate assessment of what the follower needs in order to be effective. The "follower" in the OTS environment is the officer trainee. Hersey and Blanchard's model provides a framework through which flight commanders can look at the trainee as he or she progresses through the various stages of the OTS program, assess his or her development, and then apply an appropriate leader response.

This chapter presents Hersey and Blanchard's SLT and discusses the variables which are basic to the theory. Further, it shows how the model matches appropriate leadership styles with specific levels of follower development (maturity).

## VARIABLES

### Maturity

Defined. According to SLT, the most important variable is the subordinate, or follower. The follower's level of development, or maturity, determines a superior's response in a given situation. When speaking of maturity, Hersey and Blanchard define it as "the ability and willingness of people to take resposibility for directing their own behavior" (1:151). Hersey and Blanchard go on to define ability in terms of job maturity. Skill, knowledge, and experience bear on a follower's ability, or job maturity. On the other hand, Hersey and Blanchard use the concept of psychological maturity to define the other component of maturity: willingness. Willingness does not necessarily mean only compliance, it also has to do with the confidence and commitment necessary to accomplish the task at hand.

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"This section is taken from Management of Organizational Behavior, pages 149-161, edited by Major Larry R. Walker."

Job maturity (ability) then, and psychological maturity (willingness), combine to form the overall maturity level of followers. Here, it is appropriate to make a couple of points about maturity. For the purposes of the Hersey and Blanchard model, maturity is not defined in the strictest sense of the word. Rather, it refers to the group's or individual's response to a specific task or function which the leader wishes accomplished. Further, it can refer to a group as a whole, or an individual in the group. Thus, an individual may be at a different maturity level than the group, and therefore need leader attention which varies from that of the group overall. As a measure of a follower's maturity, Hersey and Blanchard see maturity as a matter of degree.

The Maturity Continuum. Hersey and Blanchard divide maturity (M) along a continuum into four levels:

Low. M1 (low maturity) indicates those individuals who are both unable and unwilling to take responsibility for accomplishing a specific job/task. They lack the necessary competence, confidence, and commitment to succeed on their own.

Low To Moderate. M2 (low to moderate maturity) refers to followers who are willing but unable. Confidence and enthusiasm are present, but not high because of the lack of skills for the task.

Moderate To High. M3 (moderate to high maturity) on the continuum, is a follower who is able but unwilling. The skill and/or knowledge level has been achieved, but now there exists an unwillingness in the sense that he or she may have lost the confidence or commitment to perform--there may even be a motivational problem.

High. The final stop on the continuum, M4 (high maturity), identifies those people who are both able and willing, or confident in the performance of their duties. This is obviously the desired situation. However, this level of maturity calls for a specific leader response (leadership style), as do all the previously described levels of maturity.

## Leader Behavior

Hersey and Blanchard categorize two types of leader behavior, task and relationship, which they feel are central to the concept of leadership style:

> Task behavior: The extent to which leaders are likely to organize and define the roles of the members of the group (followers); to explain what activities each is to do and when, where, and how tasks are to be accomplished;

characterized by endeavoring to establish well-defined patterns of organization, channels of communication, and ways of getting jobs accomplished.

Relationship behavior: The extent to which leaders are likely to maintain personal relationships between themselves and members of their group (followers) by opening up channels of communication, providing socioemotional support, ''psychological strokes,'' and facilitating behaviors (1:96).

## LEADERSHIP STYLES

Hersey and Blanchard identify four specific leadership styles. Each is a combination of task and relationship behavior, and corresponds directly to each of the four levels of maturity (1:153). Figure 2-1 depicts a bell-shaped curve which indicates an appropriate leadership style directly over the corresponding level of maturity.

### Style S1 (Telling)

This style relates directly to M1. Followers in this category are unable and unwilling--they need directive leader behavior which is primarily high task oriented. They need to be told what to do, and how and when to do it. Too much relationship behavior by a leader with followers at this maturity level may be construed as rewarding poor performance (1:153).

### Style S2 (Selling)

This leadership style relates directly to the M2 (unable but willing) level of maturity. Here, high task-oriented leader behavior is still important, as in the ''telling'' style, but the leader should also use high relationship-oriented behavior to take advantage of the follower's willingness and enthusiasm. An effective leader in this situation expands two-way communication, explains objectives, and answers subordinates' questions in an effort to encourage them to accept organizational goals. This supportive, directive approach helps the subordinate begin to develop the ability necessary to perform his/her job and progress in the organization (1:153).

### Style S3 (Participating)

As he or she progresses, the subordinate moves into M3 (able but unwilling) on the maturity continuum. Here the follower is no longer ''unable,'' therefore, high task-oriented behavior by the leader is no longer necessary. However, unwillingness, characterized by insecurity or low motivation may be a problem. This change in willingness can often be explained by the follower's

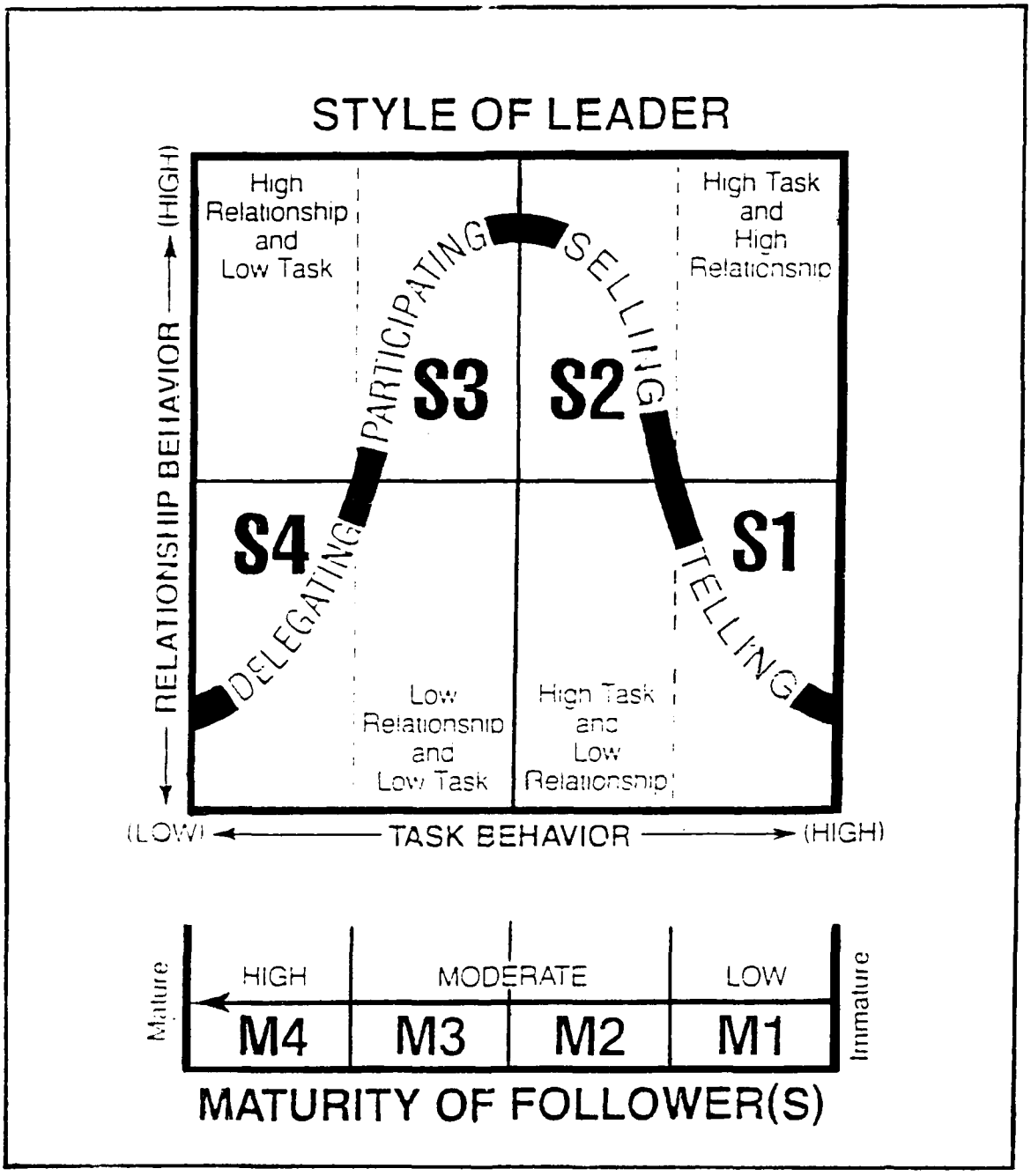


Figure 2-1 Hersey and Blanchard's Situational Leadership Model (1:152)

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''uneasiness'' with his or her increase in responsibilty or ''disenchantment'' with organizational goals. At any rate, an S3 (participating) style of leadership is called for which emphasizes a high-relationship approach as in S2, ''selling,'' but is now supplemented with a participatory style, emphasizing a non-directive, facilitative, communicative style which allows the follower to share in decision making with the leader (1:153). The goal is a return of the enthusiasm and motivation which characterize willingness.

Style S4 (Delegating)

Ultimately of course, the leader wants to develop the M4 (able and willing) follower. A high level of individual responsibility exists here so there is no need for the leader to apply more than the normal (low) degree of task or relationship-oriented behavior. This is known as the S4 (delegating) style (1:153). In fact, too much leader involvement in this phase would probably be counter productive to this situation where the follower needs very little supervision or direct support.

In sum, Hersey and Blanchard's basic concept of situational leadership states: ''...there is no one best way to influence people. Which leadership style a person should use with individuals or groups depends on the maturity level of the people the leader is attempting to influence...'' (1:151). Table 2-1 more graphically shows the appropriate leadership styles for various maturity levels.

| MATURITY LEVEL | APPROPRIATE STYLE |
|---|---|
| M1<br>Low Maturity<br>Unable and unwilling<br>or insecure | S1<br>Telling<br>High task<br>and<br>low relationship behavior |
| M2<br>Low to<br>Moderate Maturity<br>Unable but willing<br>or confident | S2<br>Selling<br>High task<br>and<br>high relationship behavior |
| M3<br>Moderate to<br>High Maturity<br>Able but unwilling<br>or insecure | S3<br>Participating<br>High relationship<br>and<br>low task behavior |
| M4<br>High Maturity<br>Able/competent<br>and<br>willing/confident | S4<br>Delegating<br>Low relationship<br>and<br>low task behavior |

TABLE 2-1 Leadership Styles (S) matched with maturity (M) levels (1:15[4])

## Chapter Three

## THE SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP THEORY AND OTS

With a basic understanding of Hersey and Blanchard's Situational Leadership Theory as outlined in the previous chapters, this chapter briefly overviews the OTS program and shows how SLT can be applied to the leaders and followers at OTS. For the purposes of this discussion, the leader at OTS is the flight commander. The followers then, are the officer trainees.

## THE USAF OFFICER TRAINING SCHOOL

### The Followers

The relationship between flight commanders and officer trainees is the crux of this paper. To better understand this relationship, the reader needs to know a little about officer trainees and what they bring into the situation. The average officer trainee is 27 years of age, and many have held responsible jobs as civilians (19:--). Many too are prior service enlisted members--of eleven OTS classes in FY 87, 386 of 1228 (31%) total entries into OTS were prior service (13:--). Most (prior service and civilians) have been working for several years to earn a degree; with OTS as their goal--so motivation is high. Early in the program, many prior service officer trainees display ability beyond that of their peers. Their military experience gives them a head start in awareness of military standards, customs and courtesies, and uniform wear. They're still uncomfortable, however, with the OTS regimen, as they've never experienced anything like it in the ''real'' Air Force--because there is no similar mission in the Air Force.

### The OTS Mission

''The OTS mission is to lead, train, motivate, evaluate, and commission as second lieutenants, candidates who attain Air Force officership standards in response to USAF, ANG and USAFR requirements'' (10:3).

Further, the OTS stated objectives are to:

(1) Provide

(a) An orderly transition of commissioned service.

(b) The essential military knowledge, skills, and values a new Air Force officer needs to perform effectively during the initial years of commissioned service, as outlined in the USAF Precommissioning/Initial Education Memorandum of Understanding (PIEMU).

(c) A foundation for each officer's professional development, both on active duty and through Air Force Professional Education programs.

(d) Sufficient numbers of newly commissioned officers to meet Air Force manpower requirements.

(2) Instill in each graduate

(a) High standards of character, conduct, self-discipline, commitment, integrity, and honor.

(b) A sense of personal responsibility for the mission and people.

(c) Attitudes and interests consistent with a career as an Air Force officer.

(3) Identify and eliminate trainees who don't meet the standards required of commissioned officers in the Air Force (10:3).

OTS has identified areas of concentration necesssary to accomplish the above.

Areas Of Study

Specific goals, objectives, and samples of behavior are incorporated into lessons in four subject areas (Communicative Skills, Defense Studies, Air Force Leadership and Management, and Professional Knowledge) and two Field Leadership areas (Drill and Ceremonies, and Health and Fitness) (16:--).

An officer trainee's progress in each area of study is measured through written tests and assignments, or practical application over a 12-week period, which is broken into four, 3-week blocks (17:1). Each of these measurements and 3-week blocks are discussed later in this chapter.

OTS Student Organization

Part of the uniqueness of OTS is owed to the fact that the officer trainees ''govern'' themselves to a certain extent (8:3). The students are organized into a wing structure similar to most USAF bases. First and second-class trainees (those in the fourth and third 3-week training periods respectively) run the trainee organization under the watchful eye and guidance of the commissioned staff (8:3).

An officer trainee wing commander commands two groups, under which are organized squadrons and flights. Trainee commanders at each level have an associated staff which performs routine operations functions (8:5). Officer trainee commanders and staff are chosen based on the performance and potential they've demonstrated thus far in the program. Third and fourth-class students (second and first 3-week training periods respectively) are known as ''lowerclass'' and naturally aspire to hold the wing, group, and squadron leadership positions (8:2). The practical application and leadership experience which the trainees receive through this method supplement the academic study and enhance the effectiveness of training, and help the student to understand the organizational environment to which they'll be exposed as second lieutenants (8:2).

Privileges And The Merit/Demerit System

Trainees may earn varying levels of privilege status, which range from ''Bedposted,'' which is basically confinement to his or her room; to ''Medina,'' which is use of the Lackland Training Annex facilities; to ''Lackland,'' which is permission to visit Lackland AFB and its facilities; to ''Off-base,'' which allows weekend excursions within a 300-mile radius (9:2). Off-base privilege status is a major goal (behind graduation) of most students. Demerit totals, (on a varying scale depending on a trainee's class status) at the end of each reporting week, determine privilege status (9:2). Merits and demerits measure a trainee's ability to understand and demonstrate basic fundamentals of behavior, progress, and adaptability to military life. This system is a useful tool (as discussed in Chapter Four) for the flight commander to apply specific task and relationship behavior as appropriate to each student's level of maturity and the prevailing situation.

## APPLYING THE MODEL TO THE OFFICER TRAINING SCHOOL

With a basic knowledge of Situational Leadership Theory, and the OTS program, the two can now be merged. Each of the four, 3-week blocks of instruction at OTS, with their progressive increases in experience, knowledge, motivation, and responsibility can be fit into a corresponding quadrant of the Hersey and Blanchard model. This section analyzes each block by describing the task and psychological factors which bear on the students' maturity levels--in other words, what do they have to do, and how do they feel about it? That accomplished, each block is then categorized in terms of its maturity level on the situational leadership maturity continuum. As shown in Chapter Two, each maturity level requires a matching leadership behavior response. This section also suggests an appropriate leader (flight commander) behavior for each block. This is not an attempt at this point to suggest specific examples and techniques which a flight commander should use with the trainees, (that will come later in

specific detail in Chapter Four) rather, it will round out the section [illegible] showing how the model links to the OTS flight commander/leader. However, before we can apply the model to OTS, it is important for the reader to understand the significance of the compressed nature of the OTS training schedule.

The 12-week ''Mandate''

As the trainees move through the four blocks of the OTS program, progressively increasing levels of responsibility are thrust upon them. Accordingly, there are increasing levels of expected performance which the trainee must achieve in order to make the [illegible] through the program from fourth-class trainee to graduation [illegible]. The 12-week time limit makes it virtually mandatory that each trainee make this progression through the maturity levels. A trainee [illegible] having difficulty meeting the academic, physical, and [illegible] standards associated with progression to succeeding [illegible] that is, one who does not successfully ''mature'' (in ability and willingness) will likely need special attention. The flight commander must reassess that trainee's maturity level and provide [illegible] commensurate with his or her needs. If the trainee does not respond favorably, i.e., attain sufficient maturity to progress with [illegible] peers, the inflexibility of the 12-week structure dictates [illegible] be recycled back in the program for a chance to ''re-learn'' [illegible] the maturity necessary for progression or be disenrolled altogether (5:2). In the ''real world'' where there generally is no [illegible] as such, this approach is not that much unlike an employee [illegible] not ''mature'' in the sense of knowledge, experience, and [illegible] of responsibility--he or she generally doesn't progress [illegible] and may even be fired. The next section looks at each block [illegible] OTS program and the levels of maturity which prevail, and shows [illegible] why the flight commander leadership styles advocated by the [illegible] and Blanchard model are appropriate.

[illegible]

[illegible] overall training goal for the first 3-week block (fourth [illegible]) is to develop knowledge about the organization and heritage of [illegible] Force and to obtain compliance with applicable USAF and OTS [illegible] particularly those concerning appearance, room [illegible] and customs and courtesies (8:2).

[illegible] Factors That Affect Ability. Overall responsibility is low, [illegible] of learning to do is high. Generally, the only formal [illegible] is that of the ''honcho'' (supervisor) for a specific [illegible] then, those positions are usually given to prior service [illegible] discussed earlier in this chapter, prior service [illegible] come to OTS with a greater (at least at first) [illegible] than initial entry trainees.

Reviewing the major curriculum events for fourth-class students (Table 3-1), as listed by the OTS Scheduling Branch, reveals [illegible] major types of events are accomplished during the first 3 weeks [illegible] OTS: The 2-week long Early Morning Run (EMR) program, the first [illegible] pitch softball game, the first two of five Physical Fitness [illegible] (PFT), and Consolidated Written Test-One (CWT-1) -the only [illegible] measurement during this block (12:1-20). In reality, fourth-[illegible] trainees do have a significant challenge during the first weeks [illegible] OTS; they have to learn how to fit into the military, a task as complex and demanding as socializing into an entirely new [illegible]

Psychological Factors That Affect Willingness. Although [illegible] events are actually low, the trainees perceive everything [illegible] as a major event. Their duty days by regulation are from 0500 to [illegible] 9:A1-1). However, many trainees feel they need to get up [illegible] and go to bed later (surreptitiously) to find quiet time for [illegible] other preparation for the next day. Additionally, there are meets to attend, personnel processing, room maintenance chores, details [illegible] 'greenies'' (grass cutting-trimming-watering), early morning mile-and-a-half run, etc.,--it all compounds the time crunch. It goes without saying that the environment is threatening: the trainees are always being evaluated. They must endure ''tight [illegible] for the first 10-training days--sit and eat at attention, [illegible] look straight ahead, and both feet flat on the floor (4:4). [illegible] perceived loss of individualism too--the group is favored [illegible] individual. In fact, teamwork, as a concept, is stressed continually throughout the 12-week program (8:2). Many trainees who are used [illegible] 'going it alone'' have trouble with this in the early going. Further, the students march as a flight everywhere. In fact, with [illegible] exceptions, this rule stands for the duration of the program [illegible] It follows that in order to do this, the student must learn [illegible] The drill performance rating measurement is not too far away [illegible] time for preparation is now. Success depends on practice; [illegible] depends on team effort--again, some students have trouble [illegible] team. As discussed earlier, privilege status and training progress are measured through feedback in the form of demerits. Presently [illegible] regulation to leave the base for the first 3 weeks, trainees [illegible] highly value off-base privileges, but they have trouble [illegible] how they'll ever achieve that goal (9:1).

Summary. Fourth-class trainees are low in required knowledge [illegible] are faced with a highly-structured, high-pressure environment [illegible] are exposed to negative feedback and they display anxiety at [illegible] mistakes. Many don't survive. For a variety of reasons, [illegible] that OTS is not for them, and they are allowed to leave [illegible] without prejudice through the self-initiated elimination [illegible] (5:3). But most students do remain and want to know how to [illegible]

Hersey and Blanchard characterize this group, in this phase of training as "unable"--they lack the experience and knowledge at this point, and even though they are highly motivated to survive, and may display a certain commitment, the overriding factor of lack of confidence--with everything that faces them--categorizes them as "floundering" in Hersey and Blanchard's terms (1:153).

Flight Commander Behavior. For a fourth-class trainee, everything that they must do, learn, and cope with, in addition to what amounts to "culture shock" for them, translates into high-task, low-relationship behavior for the flight commander. The flight commander must remember that at this stage what is more important to the trainee's survival is not personal relationships and psychological "strokes" but making sure that the trainee knows what is expected, and then giving him or her the tools to succeed. This is a time for showing and telling.

Second Block

The primary goal for this block (third class) is the development of leadership and management knowledge and experience to prepare students to take on upperclass positions in the student wing (8:2). Standards of appearance and behavior are still actively reinforced, but now the students are beginning to get a better grip on the OTS system--they have their basic survival skills.

Two Factors That Affect Ability. The overall responsiblity level is relatively low, but involvement by the upperclass is beginning to dwindle as their own graduation approaches. The trainees have the most difficult aspects of OTS socialization down very well--uniform wear, room maintenance, marching, and customs and courtesies--allowing the curriculum pace to quicken now and shift to being more oriented to individual performance factors than group performance. The focus of responsibility begins to center on applying for upperclass positions now. They meet the selection boards about 1 month into this block (12:19). The upperclass begins to give the third classmen more freedom and expects them to do well more or less on their own. Thus flight commander involvement must still be strong. The flight commander also accomplishes mandatory counseling sessions at the midpoint and leads an increased number of classroom lectures (12:19). Compared to the three major events they faced as fourth classmen, third-class students face nine major challenges (Table 3-1). These include: CWT-2, the Leadership Reaction Course, Drill Performance Rating (DPR), the 1 1/2 mile Run Test, the Practice Letter Writing, three competitive one-pitch softball games, two PFTs, application for upperclass positions (12:1-20). Third-class students bring a lot of enthusiasm to these challenges.

Psychological Factors That Affect Willingness. Students are more confident than they were in the first 3 weeks--they know their way around and how to survive. Their motivation and morale are higher than ever--they're in ''real'' uniforms for the first time (blue duty uniforms vs fatigues), they have the chance to earn off-base privileges, and they're no longer at the bottom of the totem pole because a new fourth class has arrived. This change in follower attitude requires a change in leadership behavior.

Summary. Although only the CWT, DPR, and the Run Test are graded measurements, the trainees have plenty to keep them busy. They have survived the trials of the first 3 weeks with more confidence and feeling more comfortable in the OTS environment. Their innate motivation, which they brought with them to OTS, and their commitment (they're still here!) can now take over and they move into moderate willingness according to Situational Leadership Theory (1:153). But, they still have three fourths of OTS ahead of them, and much to learn before they can meet upperclass standards of performance. Their ability in terms of Hersey and Blanchard: low to moderate (1:153).

Flight Commander Behavior. The astute flight commander is aware of the changes in the OTS program now: With the increasing responsibilities and expectations thrust upon the students, the flight commander is watching carefully for changes in the trainees' maturity. Although they have made the transition from fourth class and basically have the necessary survival skills, third-class students are still ''unable'' regarding the academic and training challenges that lie ahead. To maintain the motivation, or ''willingness,'' of third-class students and to help them face their challenges, flight commanders should use a ''selling'' leadership style (1:153). The selling style is high in both task and relationship behaviors. Just as with the telling leadership style, the leader provides the direction for tasks, but, as Hersey and Blanchard put it,''...through two-way communication and explanation, the leader tries to get the followers to 'buy into' desired behaviors'' (1:153).

## Third Block

The major training goal for second-class students is to give them actual leadership and management experience by running the student organization (8:2). The upperclass trainees have a wing structure parallel to the OTS wing and they're responsible for a significant portion of the training of lowerclass students, as well as for planning social and community relations events.

Task Factors That Affect Ability. During this and the next block of training, responsibility is very high and students have most of the knowledge they need to face their new responsibilities. Their primary task now, as upperclassmen, is to supervise and train the lowerclass--which is the newly-arrived fourth class. Knowledge,

experience, and data learned as third and fourth-class students are put to use now in this effort. Throughout the OTS program, students use their upperclass as role models upon which to base their own progress. For their upperclass positions, students work with their commissioned-staff advisors which for the most part, don't tell the students what to do; rather, they work with them as team members. Flight commanders are encouraged to let the students make their own mistakes and to learn from them. The curriculum is much the same as the previous 3 weeks (Table 3-1), but there are only five major events--and all five are graded measurements: CWTs 3 and 4, the Graded Letter, Graded Briefing, and PFTs 5, 6, and 7--one of which the students must pass (12:1-20).

Psychological Factors That Affect Willingness. Generally, second-class students are excited about becoming upperclass and are eager to take on their positions in the student wing. Their enthusiasm however, is tempered with the realization of the amount of responsibility that's been thrust upon them, and they seem somewhat unsure about how they should accomplish their jobs. Further, due to the added responsibilities of upperclass positions, student workload goes way up, almost as high as it was during the first 3 weeks. So, emphasis now returns to the group as cooperation between students is necessary to get all the work done and to make good decisions concerning the management and training of the new lowerclass.

Summary. Second-class trainees fit Hersey and Blanchard's model in that they appear ''able'' but ''unwilling'' (1:153). Able in the sense that they have a good grasp of the task at hand and the knowledge (gained from their predecessors) necessary to accomplish it. Unwilling however, in that their enthusiasm and confidence is shaken by the amount of responsibility suddenly entrusted to and thrust upon them.

Flight Commander Behavior. Second-class trainees, who fit into the model as able but unwilling, should respond to a less directive approach with emphasis on relationship behavior (1:153). Once they understand their goals, they should be left alone to accomplish them. A participative atmosphere should prevail--which will help the trainees to regain their confidence and enthusiasm, thus their willingness for the task.

## Fourth Block

The general training goal of the last 3-week block (first class) is to prepare the trainees for transition to their new roles as second lieutenants (8:2).

Task Factors That Affect Ability. First-class trainees continue to operate the student wing, a high-responsibility task, but they also have high knowledge, or ability, to get the job done. First-class

| BLOCK ONE (4th class) | BLOCK TWO (3rd class) | BLOCK THREE (2nd class) | BLOCK FOUR (1st class) |
|---|---|---|---|
| - CWT-1*<br>- EMR<br>- Game 1<br>- PFT 1/2 | - CWT-2*<br>- DPR*<br>- Run test*<br>- LRC I<br>- Briefing I<br>- Letter I<br>- Games 2/3/4<br>- PFT 3/4<br>- Competition for upper-class position | - CWT-3*<br>- CWT-4*<br>- Briefing*<br>- Letter*<br>- PFT 5/6/7* | - CWT-5*<br>- APR* |
| TOTAL/GRADED EVENTS | | | |
| 4/1 | 9/3 | 5/5 | 2/2 |

LEGEND:
* = Graded Event
CWT = Consolidated Written Test
EMR = Early Morning Run
PFT = Physical Fitness Test
DPR = Drill Proficiency Rating
LRC = Leadership Reaction Course
APR = Airman Proficiency Rating

Table 3-1 Major events which affect ability (12:1-20)

students have only the APR and CWT-5 left (Table 3-1). Their focus now shifts to preparations for graduation, which is also the major responsibility they have during the last 3 weeks. They must plan and put on their first-class mixer, a picnic, dining-in, and graduation parade. Additionally, it's during this block that they organize and staff boards to select their replacements from the lowerclass. They also update their continuity folders for their upperclass positions to pass on to their replacements from the lowerclass.

Psychological Factors That Affect Willingness. As a group, first-class students are both able and willing to face every challenge during the last 3 weeks of OTS. The workload has gone drastically down from the peak at the beginning of the previous 3-week period, and motivation is high because they can see the light at the end of tunnel--they graduate in just a short time. They're the ''old heads'' at OTS; they know the system well and they rarely seek flight commander advice. The last week at OTS is primarily dead time used to accomplish final out processing; very little training occurs now.

Summary. First-class trainees know what to do and how to do it. Moreover, they're motivated to do a good job, since much of what they have to do involves preparations for graduation-related events. They have mastered the system, they've taught others how to adjust to the system, and they view themselves as highly capable of accomplishing any OTS-related task.

Flight Commander Behavior. Hersey and Blanchard's Situational Leadership Theory characterizes first-class students as having high ability and high willingness (1:153). The appropriate flight commander leadership style is ''delegating.'' Very little task or relationship behavior is necessary at this point. In fact, if all is on track, only caretaker effort is called for.

## CONCLUSION

This section has shown the parallels between Hersey and Blanchard's Situational Leadership Theory and a typical OTS class as it progressed through the four blocks of instruction enroute to graduation day and commissioning. Situational Leadership Theory helps the flight commander to recognize the mechanisms at work in the OTS environment which relate to student maturity levels. Examining this parallel should help OTS flight commanders recognize specific situational occurrences in the training environment and to identify the most appropriate leadership behavior to help the individual trainee or the group as a whole.

The next section offers specific actions which flight commanders can take in response to specific situations along the maturity continuum.

## Chapter Four

## WHAT TO DO

As shown in previous chapters, maturity levels of OTS students, as a characteristic group, should change as students progress in status from fourth class through first class. These changes correspond to the varying levels of maturity outlined in Hersey and Blanchard's Situational Leadership Theory. This theory recommends a different leadership style for each of the four maturity levels OTS students should transition through as they successfully achieve the goals of the OTS training program. However, for OTS flight commanders to put the Situational Leadership Theory into actual practice, the theory needs to be broken down into specific behaviors and techniques flight commanders can use when leading officer trainees.

This chapter lists specific behaviors and techniques flight commanders can use to personally display the four primary leadership styles described by Hersey and Blanchard. In particular, this chapter addresses five major areas in which flight commanders and students are directly involved: room maintenance, office reporting procedures, drill (marching), classroom procedures, and feedback/documentation procedures. For each of these major areas, this chapter lists a different set of behaviors and techniques specific to each of the four phases of student development.

The behaviors and techniques recommended in this chapter are drawn from the authors' total of 6 years of experience as members of the OTS staff. Both authors have served as flight commanders and their combined follow-on assignments included: squadron operations officer, squadron commander, curriculum area manager, Chief, OTS Officer Orientation Division, and Executive Officer for the OTS Commander. The recommendations made here are also based on the authors' years of observing and supervising flight commanders. Moreover, most of the behaviors and techniques recommended in this chapter have been used with success by the authors and other flight commanders. In fact, many of the recommendations are more "reports" on what successful flight commanders have and, in fact, are doing than they are "innovations." Despite these facts, some of the recommendations may, in minor ways, be counter to existing OTS regulations. Therefore, Chapter Five lists changes that must be made in various regulations to fully and "legally" implement this chapter's recommended leadership behaviors and techniques.

## ROOM MAINTENANCE

Room maintenance refers to student efforts to set up and maintain their dormitory rooms in accordance with very specific and somewhat complex instructions contained in OTSR 50-1, *Officer Trainee Dormitory Arrangement*. As an evaluation tool for flight commanders, room maintenance reveals an officer trainee's time management ability, motivation, attention to detail, ability to work as a team with his or her roommate(s), and overall ability to adapt to military life (7:1).

### Fourth Class

The majority of instruction in room maintenance will be done by the fourth-class students' Lower Flight Captain (LFC) and his or her assistant (ALFC). LFCs are upperclass students who are in charge of the training and supervision of flights of lowerclass students. LFCs rely on the help of other upperclass students within each squadron to instruct new students in room maintenance procedures. Students tasked with helping LFCs teach room maintenance are called "roombuddies"; a roombuddy is assigned to each lowerclass room. However, even though fourth-class students have a lot of help setting up their rooms, flight commander involvement is still very necessary to ensure students understand what's required. So much attention is required because room maintenance is the first big hurdle officer trainees face. If they don't learn how to set their rooms up and maintain them very well, they'll earn demerits throughout the program.

Recommendations. Remembering that a directive leadership style is most appropriate for new trainees, flight commanders should follow the recommendations below to enable students to quickly and effectively get their rooms in order.

a. Inspect rooms with students and their LFC/ALFC watching. By doing this, students will better understand what types of things flight commanders look for during inspections and can alter their room maintenance efforts accordingly. Let students know what is expected and show them how to accomplish it.

b. Follow up unacceptable inspections with additional in-room instruction for poorly performing students.

c. Inspect rooms at least 3 days in a row, or until students, as a group, seem to understand how to keep their rooms in proper order.

d. At the end of the first week of training, ask students if they know their roombuddies. If they don't, find out who their roombuddies are and give them demerits for failure to follow instructions concerning their responsibilities.

e. Consider organizing a "roombuddy inspection" where roombuddies get one fourth of the demerits earned by the students whom they are supposed to be helping. This technique will encourage roombuddies to be actively involved in getting students trained in room maintenance.

f. Inspect rooms at least twice each week while students are fourth class. Try not to inspect on the same day each week; keep students guessing as to when inspections will be so they won't be tempted to cut corners on days they feel free from an inspection. This is necessary to help get room maintenance established as a habit, not a task only performed to pass an impending inspection.

g. Conduct no-notice security drawer checks each week while students are fourth class, even if the checks must be conducted after duty hours. If after-duty hours inspections are required, don't allow students to open their security drawers until they are being inspected and don't issue demerits (per OTSR 50-1, rooms are only required to be in inspection order during duty hours); however, use inspection results as information for follow-on counseling.

h. Just before students turn third class, have their LFC organize a mass check to ensure the new blue uniform items they'll begin to wear when they turn third class have been marked in accordance with OTSR 50-1.

Third Class

As students turn third class, involvement of upperclass students in the maintenance of lowerclass student rooms should begin to fade. However, since fourth-class students will have already had 3 weeks of intensive effort in room maintenance, flight commanders should expect students to be very capable in room maintenance. If some students are not performing to the average level of their flightmates, flight commanders should document and counsel the poorly performing students.

Recommendations. Since Hersey and Blanchard recommend a "selling" type of leadership style for followers possessing the characteristics of third-class students, flight commanders must alter their directive approach regarding room maintenance. To ensure students continue to properly maintain their rooms and to more accurately display the relationship-oriented selling style of leadership, flight commanders should change their supervision of room maintenance in the ways listed below.

a. Inspect rooms at least twice per week during the first 2 weeks of the third-class period, then only once during the last week. During the last week, students will be very busy preparing to take on upperclass positions and to take their second Consolidated

Written Test, as well as preparing for graded briefings. Too many room inspections during the last week could force student attention away from these more important activities.

b. Conduct only one security drawer inspection during this period and conduct it on a surprise basis.

c. Inspections don't need to be as thorough and detailed as they were when students were fourth class. By now students will already be well trained in room maintenance and should have major procedures down to a habit pattern. Inspections should concentrate on obvious violations of room maintenance standards, such as hidden items in drawers or overhead cabinets, dirty floors and baseboards, items not grounded, blinds open, thermostats incorrectly set, and other violations that come from being rushed or careless.

Second Class

As explained in previous chapters, second-class students should be more independent and capable than fourth and third-class students. In fact, their capability would lead Hersey and Blanchard to classify them as "able"; however, their independence would classify them as "unwilling." The Situational Leadership Theory prescribes a participating style of leadership to motivate followers who are able but unwilling. Therefore, room maintenance supervision techniques for second-class students should recognize the demonstrated ability of students to properly maintain their rooms and give them the freedom from harsh inspections that their demonstrated ability deserves.

Recommendations.

a. The objective of room maintenance inspections from the second-class point on is to ensure standards are maintained and upperclass student rooms serve as good examples to newly arriving lowerclass students. Remembering these objectives, flight commander inspections should only focus on obvious violations.

b. Never inspect student rooms more than once per week after students turn upperclass. If possible, inspect the same day each week so students will be able to anticipate inspections. Students should have room maintenance down to a habit pattern; however, the demands of second-class status may force them to spend less time than before on room maintenance. To ensure rooms meet standards, have the upperclass students selected by flight commanders to supervise their peers, the Upper Flight Captains (UFCs), inspect on an irregular basis. However, direct UFCs to only look for obvious violations.

c. Conduct one security drawer inspection during this period. However, telegraph when the inspection will be. Telling students to remain in their rooms just before time to march to a sports game or

telling them to wait in their rooms before they shower after a game will enable students to anticipate the inspection. This will give students a chance to get their drawers in order. However, don't give so much warning that students have time to correct gross violations.

d. Flight commanders should consider skipping room inspections as a reward for superior flight performance, such as winning an important game, earning a 100 percent pass rate on a Physical Fitness Test for the first time, or winning Flight of the Week. One note of caution though, never use room maintenance inspections as punishment for poor performance, particularly if demerits given could seem petty or arbitrary. Giving what would seem to be "bogus" demerits destroys the flight commander's credibility and student motivation.

First Class

Flight commander involvement in room maintenance should be at a minimum during the last 3 weeks of training. The apparent "hands off" approach to room maintenance recommended in the list below relies on students achieving the final stage of maturity in Hersey and Blanchard's Situational Leadership Theory. First-class officer trainees should be maintaining their rooms as a matter of course, rather than just to avoid punishment through demerits. Therefore, they should respond favorably to a delegating style of leadership from their flight commanders. To students displaying the highest level of maturity in the task of room maintenance, heavy-handed inspections will destroy morale by sending incorrect messages concerning their abilities and the motivations of their flight commanders. Students expect to be able to earn their flight commander's respect and the resulting benefit of the doubt that comes with that respect.

Recommendations. To ensure room maintenance standards are sustained and to demonstrate a delegating leadership style, flight commanders should follow the techniques listed below.

a. Only inspect once each week and not at all during the last week of training. Maintenance of standards should be trusted to UFCs, and flight commanders should only rarely award room maintenance demerits. In other words, trainees should be maintaining acceptable room standards without direct involvement from flight commanders. Students identified by UFCs or flight commanders for poor room maintenance during the last 3 weeks of training probably haven't made the last jump in maturity to the "able and willing" level. Flight commanders must carefully consider the reasons for a student's poor room maintenance and the student's worthiness for a commission.

b. Clearly telegraph or entirely skip the security drawer inspection for first-class students.

## REPORTING PROCEDURES

Reporting procedures are outlined in OTSR 30-1, Customs, Courtesies, and Conduct, and are used by students when they enter or exit a superior's office, room, or work area. These procedures help a flight commander judge students' poise and confidence, ability to salute properly, and overall military bearing.

### Fourth Class

Fourth-class students are very anxious about reporting procedures. Students are concerned because they must properly execute the procedures in one-on-one situations with their flight commanders. In these situations, students don't have the security of surrounding flightmates, enabling them to blend into a group; they go it alone. Naturally, student motivation to learn and perfect reporting procedures is very high.

Reporting procedures are also very important to flight commanders. How well officer trainees perform reporting procedures positively or negatively influences the first impressions flight commanders get of their students as they report for initial counseling. Eventually, how well they perform the procedures directly reflects the ability of their flight commanders to train and discipline students. A similar situation exists for student performance of classroom opening and closing procedures. This area is discussed later in this chapter. Therefore, the motivation of flight commanders to ensure students can properly execute the procedures is also very high.

Ironically, even though both students and flight commanders are very concerned with perfectly performing reporting procedures, much can be gained by not strictly adhering to the procedures throughout the entire program. The technique recommendations below will illustrate how gradually allowing students to skip more and more parts of the reporting procedure process as they progress in maturity will help flight commanders display varying leadership styles.

Recommendations. To properly use reporting procedures as a tool for displaying a directive leadership style, flight commanders should follow the techniques and recommendations below:

a. Ensure LFCs and ALFCs know proper reporting procedures; they teach the procedures to new fourth-class trainees.

b. Each time a fourth-class student reports, critique his/her reporting procedures. Let students know if they're performing the procedures correctly or incorrectly.

c. Never allow a fourth-class trainee to enter or exit an office without using proper reporting and exiting procedures.

d. When flight commanders are not ready to talk to reporting fourth-class students, due to using the phone, completing paperwork, talking to colleagues or other students, etc, then they should leave students standing outside their offices. Students should not be directed to a waiting area unless the delay will be quite long or more than two students are already waiting to be seen. Using this technique will help give flight commanders a way to display relationship behavior later in the program by allowing students to enter at ease and wait during the situation described above.

e. Leave students standing when they report to ask questions or make statements. Allow them to sit only if business with them will take a long time, such as during counseling sessions.

f. Flight commanders should require each fourth-class trainee to report to their offices at least once per week to ensure students know proper reporting procedures. Having each student report regularly will give them practice "under fire" and may even prevent them from getting demerits for using improper procedures when they report to other flight commanders and superiors later in the program. Also, if students are unsure about their ability to properly perform reporting procedures, they may avoid reporting to superiors for fear of receiving demerits. Therefore, requiring students to report regularly may reduce student reluctance to visit flight commanders and instructors.

Third Class

Third-class students should favorably respond to flight commanders displaying a selling style of leadership. Since the selling style of leadership is high in both task and relationship behavior, flight commanders need to alter their supervision of reporting procedures from the exclusively task-oriented nature of the directive leadership style recommended for fourth-class students.

Recommendations. While still very much focused on task-related behavior, flight commanders of third-class students should also begin showing an increase in relationship behavior by backing away from some aspects of the procedures.

a. Flight commanders should continue to have students wait outside their doors until they're ready to talk to them unless the delay will be more than just a few minutes. If the the delay will be more than about 5 minutes, allow students to enter, using proper reporting procedures, and to have a seat and wait, if appropriate. For delays of longer than 5 minutes, ask students to return at a designated time.

b. If a flight commander is pressed for time and a third-class officer trainee knocks on his or her door, the flight commander should direct the trainee to break from proper procedures to answer direct questions concerning the nature and anticipated length of his or her visit. If the flight commander has time to deal with the student, the student should be directed to knock again and resume the proper reporting procedures. If the flight commander does not have time to visit with the student, the student should be asked to return at a designated time.

c. Students should occasionally be allowed to leave their flight commanders' offices at ease, without performing the normal exit procedures. However, flight commanders should not allow students to leave at ease after a negative counseling session.

Second Class

Second-class officer trainees respond more favorably to a participating style of leadership. This style is manifested by high relationship behavior and low task oriented behavior. By now, students should have demonstrated their ability to properly perform reporting procedures many times. Therefore, flight commanders should feel free to "back off" on reporting procedures by a significant measure. Most students should interpret this "backing off" as recognition from their flight commanders of their higher status.

Recommendations.

a. Flight commanders should allow students to leave their offices at ease more often.

b. If a flight commander is on the phone or working on paperwork when a student whom he or she sent for comes to the door, the student should be allowed to enter at ease and to sit and wait until the flight commander is ready to talk. However, the student should be required to wait outside if he or she is reporting for a negative counseling session.

c. Students reporting to flight commanders to complete routine duties, such as dropping off reports, and who don't have questions or statements to make, should be allowed to enter and exit at ease.

d. Students reporting for counseling in the Writing Improvement Program should be allowed to enter and exit at ease. Being at ease will help establish an atmosphere more conducive to learning.

First Class

Flight commanders should treat first-class trainees just as lieutenants are treated by majors. Flight commanders should command respect, not demand it, and trainees should know how to properly display military bearing and courtesy in the absence of standard, rigid guidelines. Indeed, this is the situation that will face the trainees in just a few weeks when they become lieutenants. Therefore, flight commanders should feel free to "test" their students by backing further away from standard reporting procedures.

Recommendations.

a. If a student has an appointment or was sent for by his or her flight commander, the student should be allowed to enter and exit the flight commander's office at ease. However, the student should be required to properly report if reporting for negative counseling.

b. Require first-class students to use standard reporting procedures only very rarely, such as during formal counseling sessions.

c. During the last 2 weeks of the program, occasionally rise and greet first-class officer trainees reporting to your door, just as a wing commander would who wanted to make a visiting captain feel at ease.

d. If a flight commander has sent for or has an appointment with a student and is on the phone or doing paperwork when the student arrives, the flight commander should interrupt his or her activity, if possible, to take care of business with the student.

## DRILL

Drill, or marching, as some may call it, is of great concern to OTS students and staff. One look at the OTS campus reveals the basic importance of drill--students march everywhere they go. Basic drill movements are taught by flight commanders and parade movements are taught by personnel from the Drill and Ceremonies Branch of the OTS Academic Instruction Division. In addition, drill procedures particular to OTS are covered in OTSR 30-1.

For flight commanders, drill represents more than just an orderly means of moving students from place to place. Drill gives flight commanders a lot of valuable information about their students. As students perform drill movements with their flights, they reveal their confidence, military bearing, ability to work as a member of a team

and as a team leader, adaptability to stress, ability to think and act quickly, and poise. These factors are important because they indicate a student's ability to adapt to military life.

Drill is also very important to students and they are very anxious to become proficient at performing drill movements. Students have several reasons for being concerned with drill. For one thing, drill is the only "vehicle" students can use while on the OTS campus; it's the only way they have to get from place to place at OTS. Moreover, students undergo a graded Drill Performance Rating (DPR) after being at OTS just a little more than 3 weeks. Even more, students are highly motivated to help their squadrons win graded parade competitions and to present a sharp and impressive performance during graduation parades.

Fourth Class

Since students must march virtually everywhere they go on campus, they get plenty of practice to perfect their performance of drill movements. Nevertheless, since they march almost from the moment they arrive, students are highly motivated to become very good at drill, very quickly. Therefore, to accurately display the directive style of leadership necessary for fourth-class students, flight commanders should ensure students get the instruction and practice they need to become proficient as soon as possible.

Recommendations.

a. While escorting students during the days before the official training program starts (minus training days) and during the first week of training, flight commanders should use every opportunity to explain drill procedures and to instruct drill movements. Students shouldn't be allowed to just "gaggle march" from place to place with the assumption that they'll learn proper procedures later during drill classes. Establish and enforce drill standards from the very beginning.

b. Ensure LFCs and ALFCs have good marching skills. Get out on the drill pad and march with them or observe them marching their flights in simulated DPRs. LFCs and ALFCs teach drill procedures and movements to new lowerclass students before students get formal instruction from their flight commanders.

c. Fourth-class students will organize off-duty drill practice sessions. Flight commanders should attend as many of these sessions as they can to ensure students are practicing movements correctly.

d. Spend extra time working with the lowerclass students in charge of supervising drill practice sessions ("drill honchos" and

their assistants). Ensure they know how to perform the movements before they begin off-duty drill practice sessions with their flights.

e. Require drill honchos to submit weekly reports listing off-duty practice sessions and who attended. Counsel students not attending practice sessions as to the importance of drill practice in passing the DPR measurement.

f. Be willing to spend off-duty hours, particularly during weekends, to help poorly performing students.

g. Watch students march to or from class or meals at least four times each week and make on-the-spot corrections.

h. Flight commanders should march a simulated DPR and have their drill honchos provide a critique. Students learn by watching someone who knows how to do the job; the drill honcho is not the best one to demonstrate the DPR, the flight commander is.

i. Flight commanders should not ignore students who are doing well in drill. They should try to spend an equal amount of time helping students who are doing well as they spend with students doing poorly. This way, students doing well may be able to excel on the DPR measurement.

Third Class

Third-class students should be able to march fairly well. They will have faced the DPR and only the few who didn't pass will require special attention. Students will be turning their attention to learning to march in graded and graduation parades, areas not taught by flight commanders. However, to display the selling type of leadership most effective for third-class students, flight commanders should support and encourage students as they endeavor to learn parade movements.

Recommendations.

a. Flight commanders should attend their flight's classes in parade movements and as many parade practices as possible. They should encourage students to perform well and critique their performances. However, since parade movements are taught by Drill and Ceremonies personnel, flight commanders should be sure to keep out of their way.

b. Continue monitoring students as they march to and/or from the dining hall or class at least twice per week. Make on-the-spot corrections as necessary.

## Second Class

Second-class students are highly proficient in drill and only require a minimum amount of attention to ensure standards of discipline are being maintained. The participating style of leadership appropriate for second-class students calls for low emphasis on task behavior, but high emphasis on relationship behavior. Therefore, flight commanders should continue to encourage students to do well in parades and praise them when they do well.

### Recommendations.

a. Flight commanders should cut back watching students march to meals or classes to just once per week and make spot corrections only if needed to regain control or discipline. Other corrections should be made later directly to the individuals involved.

b. Flight commanders should attend each of their squadron's formal retreat ceremonies and praise good performance. Poor performance will be dealt with by Drill and Ceremonies personnel supervising the retreat.

c. Flight commanders should continue to attend every parade practice they can and use these opportunities to encourage students and critique performance.

## First Class

First-class trainees should be able to march very well and maintain drill discipline on their own. As first-class students, they are responsible for all other students on campus and should be setting the example and enforcing standards throughout the student wing. Flight commanders are most effective with first-class students when they use a delegating leadership style. Therefore, involvement by flight commanders in supervising drill should be cut back by a large margin.

### Recommendations.

a. Flight commanders no longer need to observe their students as they march unless a UFC asks for help to maintain marching discipline.

b. Officer trainees are naturally motivated to perform well during their graduation parade, so flight commanders need not attend graduation parade practice sessions.

## CLASSROOM PROCEDURES

Classroom procedures are outlined in OTSR 30-1. Students are trained in these procedures by their LFCs and/or ALFCs. These procedures are particularly important because they involve the classroom environment, the area where the majority of contact between students and flight commanders takes place. Flight commanders and students learn a lot about each other from their relationships in the classroom. Flight commanders learn about their students' willingness to become involved in group discussions, how well they're prepared for class, if they can think and talk on their feet, if they know their duties as flight leader of the day, and many other bits of information useful in judging how well students are meeting OTS training goals. On the other hand, students learn a lot about how to be an officer by watching their flight commanders. They learn everything from how to wear their uniforms and have their hair cut to how to act, what attitude to have, and what values are important. Since a great amount of student-contact time is spent in the classroom, flight commanders should view classroom time as leadership time. As the recommendations below will show, the time flight commanders spend in classrooms with students contains many opportunities to demonstrate different styles of leadership.

### Fourth Class

Fourth-class trainees need their flight commander's leadership to help them learn to fit in at OTS. Students have a lot to learn and many new habits to develop before they can begin feeling comfortable in the OTS environment. The information below is divided into several areas where flight commanders can provide important leadership. A list of specific techniques for use with fourth-class trainees follows a brief description of each general area.

Standardized Classroom Procedures. Adhering to standardized classroom procedures, as outlined in OTSR 30-1, is very important because each flight will have several different flight commanders conduct classroom sessions throughout training. To prevent students from getting demerits from other flight commanders for using improper procedures, owning flight commanders must ensure their students know and are able to perform the standard procedures. Moreover, if students use improper procedures when being taught by other flight commanders, the owning flight commander's knowledge and/or ability to train may be doubted by his or her peers and students. The resulting lack of credibility could harm the flight commander's ability to lead and train students.

Inspections. Flight commanders are required to conduct a personal inspection of their students during classroom time every duty day, if possible (4:5). Inspections are very important because they help teach and reinforce personal appearance and uniform standards.

Classroom Preparation and Participation. Students must read the material assigned for class to be able to constructively contribute to class discussions and to pass measurements. Fourth-class students have many demands on their off-duty time, so flight commanders should be very directive concerning classroom preparation and participation.

Recommendations.

a. Strictly enforce classroom reporting procedures. Don't allow students to skip class opening or closing procedures.

b. Critique each student's performance as flight leader of the day so the student and the entire flight will understand how to properly perform the procedures. Have students who improperly execute procedures reaccomplish them immediately after they've been critiqued.

c. Never allow students to remain at ease when a flight commander enters or exits a classroom any time other than when class is in session or another flight commander is in the room.

d. Each flight commander should personally inspect his or her students everyday during the first week of training, even if a special session must be called to have an opportunity to inspect. Consider starting the first class of the day 10 minutes early to ensure having enough time to conduct a complete and close inspection.

e. During inspections, flight commanders should loudly announce each student's errors so the entire flight can benefit from each other's mistakes. Explain each error so everyone will understand and learn from each other's mistakes.

f. During the first week of training, give students an opportunity to annotate the demerits they get during inspections. They earn so many demerits during inspections the first week, they'll have a hard time remembering all the demerits as they are given. A good technique is to allow students to break attention immediately after being inspected to annotate their demerits.

g. During week 2 and/or 3, conduct "wingman" inspections where the student to the right of the trainee being inspected gets the demerits the inspected student receives for violations the "wingman" could have corrected for the student prior to the inspection. Wingman inspections heighten student awareness of uniform violations and encourage students to be aggressive in helping others correct errors.

h. Create short pop quizzes to ensure students are prepared for class. Quizzes will force students to manage their time well enough to read the required material. Document poor performance and issue demerits, as appropriate.

i. Follow all standard classroom procedures, but establish a relaxed environment once class begins to facilitate learning; don't keep the stress level high.

j. Encourage participation by all students; call on the more quiet students to answer questions or give their opinions during class. Bring everyone into the discussion.

k. Emphasize the importance of class participation by referring to applicable grading areas on the Officer Trainee Effectiveness Rating form. Make sure students understand the mandate for participation.

l. At the beginning of the second week, flight commanders should try to recall their students' names without looking at a roster. The students whom flight commanders can't recall are probably the more quiet students. These students should be counseled concerning their lack of participation.

m. Consider requiring the more quiet students to make a contribution in every class and keep track of their performance.

Third Class

Third-class students should be more comfortable in the classroom environment and more willing to contribute in class. Moreover, they should have their time management discipline down well enough to usually be prepared for class. However, since they begin wearing a new uniform combination when they turn third-class, they still need strong attention during personal inspections.

Recommendations.

a. Continue strict adherence to standard classroom procedures. However, on infrequent occasions, flight commanders should allow students to remain at ease when they enter or exit the classroom between classes.

b. Continue establishing a relaxed environment in the classroom during class. However, insist students observe standard classroom procedures.

c. During the first week of third-class status, flight commanders should use the inspection techniques and procedures recommended for fourth-class students. Renewed emphasis on uniform inspections is required because students exclusively wear fatigues until they turn third class. When they begin wearing blue duty

uniforms for the first time, they need almost the same amount of attention as new students to ensure they're trained in the proper wear and maintenance of the new uniform.

d. Continue using pop quizzes, but only infrequently, to ensure students are prepared for class.

e. Consider trading flights for several lessons with other flight commanders to give students the benefit of getting to know other members of the staff and to check how well students perform classroom procedures for someone other than their own flight commander.

f. Have students organize a brainstorming session to analyze their successes and failures on the first CWT and to make recommendations to improve performance on future CWTs.

Second Class

Students will be facing three significant challenges during the first 10 days of second-class status that may tempt flight commanders to revert to a directive style of leadership. In fact, these challenges may even make second-class students prefer to be directed. However, to enable students to continue to mature and grow in confidence and ability, flight commanders should use a participative leadership style. This style should enable students to come up with their own decisions and allow them to use the skills and information they gained over the previous 6 weeks. The major challenges of second-class students are outlined below.

Upperclass Duties. Students will begin learning and performing duties in the student wing organization during the first part of second-class status. In addition to being challenging, their new duties will be very time consuming. They'll need advice from their flight commanders and other staff members and should respond favorably to a participating leadership style where they have an input in how they accomplish their duties.

CWT-3. Due to the time demands of upperclass jobs, many students do poorly on CWT-3. Flight commander participation in student efforts to manage their time and to prepare for the CWT should be most effective. Such activities as group time management counseling sessions, renewed emphasis on group study sessions, and open question and answer periods hosted by flight commanders during off-duty or weekend time will do a lot to help new upperclass students manage their time well enough to prepare for CWT-3.

Military Briefing Measurement. This measurement is subject to the same time pressures applicable to CWT-3, but it also has the added characteristic of being the first measurement that depends, at

least in part, on student creativity. Up to this point, measurements have covered information or training where simply recalling previously learned data or performing standard marching movements was all that was required to pass. However, with the graded briefing, students must apply what they've learned about briefing techniques during a briefing they create. Student anxiety about this measurement is naturally high and the willingness of flight commanders to listen to practice briefings and give feedback can go a long way to building confidence and motivating students to do their best.

Recommendations. With these challenges in mind, every opportunity should be used to build confidence in students and to make them realize they have the ability and skills necessary to succeed.

a. Discontinue using pop quizes. Students should be motivated and able to be prepared for class on their own. Document and counsel students obviously not prepared for class.

b. Begin to allow students to skip formal classroom opening and closing procedures when several flight commander-led classroom sessions are held consecutively. Require proper procedures to open the first class and to close the series of classes.

c. Students should be allowed to remain at ease more often when their flight commanders enter or exit classrooms.

d. Personal inspections should concentrate on obvious uniform violations or lapses of attention to detail. Picky inspections will be counter-motivating and unnecessary since proper habit patterns should have been established during the previous 6 weeks. Document and counsel students with recurring uniform or appearance violations.

e. Skip some personal inspections as rewards for superior performances, such as winning Flight of the Week, doing well as a flight on the previous day's personal inspection, 100 percent pass rate on a measurement, etc.

First Class

The last 3 weeks of OTS consists of a winding down of the training program and a winding up of preparations for graduation day. In fact, the students only have one CWT left and a relatively easy Airman Performance Report measurement. Moreover, the last week of training is almost exclusively focused on preparations for graduation events and attending squadron awards banquets. Nevertheless, the importance of the last 3 weeks of training can't be over stated.

Students call the last week of training "CWT-6," meaning they feel like they're still being tested even though they've passed all graded measurements. That's a good way for flight commanders to feel as well. They should test first-class students to see if they are high in both ability and willingness to meet the standards and objectives of the OTS program. Certainly after 9 weeks at OTS, students should be able to function in the OTS environment with little or no direction from their flight commanders. First-class officer trainees should be able to meet most standards through their own volition, without constant supervision or the threat of surprise inspection. If a student hasn't reached this level of maturity, then certainly the student's worthiness of a commission is doubtful. Therefore, the techniques recommended below for displaying a delegating style of leadership are designed to allow students to demonstrate their willingness and ability to maintain standards and achieve training goals without intervention from flight commanders.

Recommendations.

a. Conduct personal inspections only very rarely and not at all during the last week of training except just before graduation to ensure students look sharp.

b. Flight commanders should allow students to remain at ease more often when they enter or exit classrooms; however, not all the time.

c. Continue to skip formal opening and closing procedures between consecutive classes.

d. Flight commanders should end requirements they may have established for daily flight reports or reports on the progress of study groups.

e. Flight commanders should delegate as much authority as possible to their UFCs. UFCs should be allowed to keep track of their flights and only come to flight commanders with problems they can't solve.

f. Flight commanders should go through their UFCs with morale, discipline, appearance, and attitude problems just as an operational unit commander would go through the NCOIC of a section within the commander's unit. Let the UFC and students work out their problems. Intervene only if absolutely necessary.

## FEEDBACK/DOCUMENTATION

Feedback and documentation refers to written documentation of student progress recorded on an OTS Form 45, "Record of Counseling," and entered into an officer trainee's training folder. Student training folders are the primary data source used for tracking student progress, selecting distinguished graduates, and evaluating recommendations from flight commanders for the elimination of students from training. OTSR 50-5, Student Counseling, requires flight commanders to conduct and document a minimum of six student counseling sessions during the 12-week OTS program. This regulation also requires documentation of certain occurrences, such as measurement failures (11:1). However, to use documentation as an effective tool for motivating students, flight commanders should produce much more documentation than required by OTSR 50-5. This section will recommend ways flight commanders can enhance their leadership by using additional documentation to provide effective and efficient positive and negative feedback.

### Fourth Class

Documentation for fourth-class students should primarily be focused on negative feedback. New students generally seek anonymity; they want to blend in and fit in. They generally interpret lack of punishment as an acknowledgement of success; therefore, generating an enormous amount of positive feedback paperwork may not be productive. Focusing on accurate and adequate documentation of negative performance is particularly important since the majority of students are recommended for elimination or request self-initiated elimination while they are lowerclass students. For example, a review of OTS attrition for CY 87 reveals 47.3 percent of the total attrition occurred during the first 3 weeks of training (13:--). Of course flight commanders shouldn't ignore superior performance in the form of objective achievements, such as Officer Trainee of the Week, 100 percent scores on measurements and tests, etc. However, other than for obvious objective achievements, positive documentation for fourth-class students can be held to a minimum. Negative documentation should be written in accordance with instructions in OTSR 50-5.

Recommendations. Flight commanders should document the following items to track student performance and to let students know when they they are not performing as well as necessary to meet standards:

a. The three highest demerit totals in the flight each week.

b. The three highest totals of room maintenance demerits each week.

c. The three most inaccurately accomplished OTS Forms 24 for each week.

d. The three highest totals of personal appearance demerits for each week.

e. Each time a student improperly performs reporting procedures.

f. Poor performance as flight leader of the day.

g. Students who are unprepared for class.

h. Negative comments concerning attitude, cooperation, motivation, or teamwork submitted by a student's LFC or ALFC.

i. Poor marching ability. Assign extra practice with Drill and Ceremonies personnel, if appropriate, or with flight drill honchos.

j. Unexcused failure to attend off-duty flight drill practice sessions.

k. Demerits earned during Saturday Morning Inspections (SMIs).

l. Late or sloppy accomplishment of assigned duties and projects.

m. Lack of involvement in classroom discussions.

n. Failure or poor performance on School Regulation Tests.

o. Lack of improvement or negative progress in scores on PFTs 1 and 2. The PFT is a test of conditioning requiring students to do all the push-ups, pull-ups, and sit-ups they can do, perform a standing broad jump, and run 600 yards as fast as they can, all within a 15 minute time limit. Particular emphasis should be placed on students who passed PFT-1 and then failed PFT-2. A student's failure to continue to work to improve PFT scores after he or she is confident of passing one of the graded PFTs (PFT-5, 6, and 7) indicates a lack of dedication to flight and squadron goals. Flights earn points for Flight of the Week awards based, in part, on the compared averages of flight PFT scores. Therefore, a student who can pass the PFT, but doesn't continue to work to improve, is not supporting flight competition goals.

Third Class

By the time students reach third-class status, most flight commanders already know who their problem students are. Doing documentation required by OTSR 50-5 and the additional documentation we recommended for fourth-class students should allow flight commanders to see trends in performance and to clearly identify students who are not progressing as they should. Flight commanders should consult their squadron commanders concerning their problem

students and consider recommending the students for elimination from the program or for administrative recycle back to an earlier stage of training. Should more data concerning poorly performing students be required, flight commanders can continue to document the information listed for fourth-class students. However, even though these negative performance factors will still be very applicable to the few problem students in each flight, flight commanders must use caution when applying these factors to students past the third week of training.

Most third-class students will have progressed to the point where many of the items for documentation recommended for fourth-class students may be poor indicators of actual relative performance for students in higher status. For example, documenting the three students with the highest demerit totals in the flight, when these students' demerit totals are just a few demerits away from the flight average, is not a realistic measure of poor performance.

Flight commanders should use a selling style of leadership for third-class students. Beginning to produce positive feedback, in the form of official documentation, can help flight commanders display the task and relationship-oriented behavior that manifests the selling style. Students are well aware of the importance of comments entered into their records via OTS Forms 45. Moreover, they're aware that their records, in a very real way, actually determine their fates at OTS, good or bad. Therefore, students are very motivated by positive information entered into their records.

Writing the documentation recommended in this section seems like it would take a lot of time. Yes, it does. Moreover, many flight commanders perform only the documentation required by OTSR 50-5, only doing more than required to document poorly performing students they intend to recommend for elimination. However, a strong and thorough program of positive and negative documentation, covering the entire spectrum of student activity, will let students know how they're doing, where they stand, where they need to improve, and most importantly, that their flight commander cares enough to not only observe their behavior, but to sit down and write about it as well. The documentation techniques recommended here should help students feel their performance is important, and by doing so, help flight commanders "sell" the goals of OTS to their students. Positive documentation does not need to be long, just a short description of the positive behavior and comments congratulating and encouraging the student is all that's needed.

Recommendations. Techniques for documenting the performance of third-class students have been divided into 10 major areas of concern. Specific techniques are listed for each area.

Measurements.

a. Praise everyone who earned higher than the class average on CWT-2 and those who earned a score of 80 or better on the DPR.

b. Write negative comments urging greater support of flight competition goals and recommending methods of improvement for everyone who scored lower than the class average on CWT-2 and for those who scored in the low 80s on the DPR (emphasize the importance of marching ability in competitive parades).

c. Comments similar to those outlined above should be provided for students after each School Regulations Test emphasizing squadron and flight competition goals.

Room Maintenance and Overall Merit/Demerit Performance.

a. Write a positive comment for everyone as they earn off-base privileges for the first time and for the first time they turn in a correct OTS Form 24, the form students use to report their weekly totals of demerits and merits; encourage them to keep up the good work.

b. Write a Form 45 comment for everyone who earns less than or more than the flight average number of demerits each week. Closely review all OTS Forms 24 for individual merits or demerits that warrant documentation. Praise students who earn merits for actions out of the ordinary, such as merits awarded for looking sharp, or for demerits awarded for significantly poor behavior, such as failure to accomplish morning cleaning details, disrespect to a superior, etc.

c. Strongly counsel and document the poor performance of students who earn Medina or Bedpost privileges.

Leadership Reaction Course (LRC). The LRC is a fast-paced leadership exercise consisting of 16 events set in escape and evasion or insurgency scenarios. The LRC reveals individual leadership, the ability to act as a team leader and member, adaptability to stress, and ability to think and act under time pressure.

a. Write a positive comment on the five or six students who showed the most impressive leadership during the LRC.

b. Write a negative comment calling for improved aggressiveness, stronger involvement, and/or better leadership for the three or four students who performed weakly during the LRC.

Upperclass Positions.

a. Write a strong positive comment for each student selected to meet the boards for selection for a command or wing staff job in the student-run wing organization. Follow up with congratulatory comments for students who go on to wing-level boards. Finally, write comments praising students who earned important jobs at the wing, group, and squadron levels.

b. Write encouraging comments to students who didn't receive jobs (officer trainee second lieutenants) and emphasize that since they have no formal job, they have time to be very involved in the training and supervision of the new lowerclass. Charge them to be very active and require them to write reports on their activities; treat them as though they have a job and make them feel involved in the student wing.

Run Test.

a. Praise the fastest male and female in the flight and everyone who ran faster than the flight average.

b. Write negative comments for students who didn't seem to be giving the test 100 percent effort.

c. Praise students who were on the remedial run program if they passed the test; continue required documentation on Remedial Run Program students who failed the test.

Physical Fitness Test (PFT).

a. Continue negative counseling for students who show no or declining progress, even though they earn passing scores (see recommendations for PFT documentation for fourth-class students).

b. Praise the highest scoring male and female in the flight. Write comments challenging the male and female who scored closest to the highest male and female to come out on top next time.

c. Compare scores between the current and previous PFTs and praise everyone who showed significant improvement.

Aerobics Program. Students earn points in the aerobics program by engaging in off-duty physical exercise events, such as running, swimming, playing basketball, etc.

a. Praise students who earn a significant number of points each week. Encourage them to continue working to earn Distinguished Graduate points from the aerobics program.

b. Negatively document students who fail to earn the weekly minimum aerobic points unless they were on medical waivers. Emphasize the importance of the aerobics program in flight and squadron competition goals.

Sports. Write the same type of comments as for the LRC for the strong and weak performers in each one-pitch softball game. In these write-ups, emphasize the importance of teamwork, the impact sports have on Flight and Squadron of the Week competition, and the greater demands coming in the flickerball program.

Practice Letter. Write comments praising students who do very well on the practice letter assignment. Encourage good performers to shoot for an outstanding grade on the letter measurement and charge them to help the poorer performing students. NOTE: Students who do poorly on this assignment will be entered into additional training which has specific requirements for documentation from both owning and grading flight commanders. Details concerning this documentation are briefed by the Communicative Skills Curriculum Area Manager during each OTS class.

Practice Briefing. Write similar comments as the ones outlined above for students who do well on the practice briefing. Also, charge the better briefers to assist members in their flights who need help.

Second Class

As students move from third to second class, they turn from lower to upperclass. New upperclass students want to play an important part in decisions concerning running the student wing and in managing their own performance. However, they still need indicators of successful performance; they want to know if they're doing things right. A participating style of leadership is most appropriate for second-class students because it allows students to be a part of the decision-making process while providing encouragement and support.

Flight commanders can enhance their display of a participative leadership style by producing much of the same documentation as recommended for third-class students. While these documentation techniques encourage and motivate, they also keep students informed about how well they're doing. When the documentation is positive, as most of it will be, it helps students build confidence in their ability.

Recommendations. Flight commanders should continue performing all the documentation techniques listed for third-class students as modified by the three second class-specific items listed below.

Upperclass Positions.

a. Monitor the performance of students in key upperclass positions for opportunities to document positive or negative performance. For example, if a lowerclass flight earns an honor, praise the flight's LFC and ALFC; if the squadron wins Squadron of the Week, praise the officer trainee squadron commander and operations officer; if the flight or squadron finishes high in competition on a measurement or inspection, praise the students in key positions responsible for each area, such as the squadron/flight academic officer, squadron material officer, or squadron athletic officer, etc.

b. Should the squadron or flight perform poorly in the areas listed above, write comments urging harder work and listing recommendations for improvement. However, take care not to direct improvement actions, just make recommendations from which students can choose.

Practice Airman Performance Report (APR) Assignment. Praise students who perform well on this assignment and urge them to earn an outstanding score on the APR measurement. Write negative counseling for poorly performing students, recommending ways to improve but allowing the students to either accept or reject the recommendations.

Graded Parades. Write positive comments for students in key positions when the squadron finishes in first place during graded parades. Emphasize the importance of parades in squadron competition and in graduation ceremonies. Likewise, should the squadron come in last place, write similar, but negative documentation. Recommend additional practice, but leave it up to the students to decide to organize practice sessions.

First Class

First-class students should be able to accomplish all of their responsibilities very well. They're competent and capable of running the student wing and achieving the remaining training goals virtually without definitive guidance. Because of their capability and eagerness to use it, a delegating style of leadership, one that allows students as much independence and authority as possible, should be the most effective style for first-class trainees.

Flight commanders should perform a lesser amount of positive documentation for first-class students because the effect of such feedback is probably not really worth the effort required to generate it. In a sense, first-class students should no longer need their flight commanders to tell them when and why they're doing things right or wrong; they ought to already know. Moreover, first-class students should no longer need to be convinced that good performance

is important; they should've already internalized the values of the system. In fact, if a flight commander has a first-class student for whom the previous statements aren't true, the flight commander probably shouldn't commission the student.

Documentation for first-class officer trainees can be limited to that required by OTSR 50-5; positive feedback for significant achievements, such as Officer Trainee of the Week or 100 percent on CWT-5; and documentation required to continue tracking any poorly performing students remaining in the flight.

## Chapter Five

# IMPLEMENTATION

Accept, enable, and teach! these are the steps OTS must take to put the Situational Leadership Theory into actual practice. This chapter explains why and how OTS should officially accept the Situational Leadership Theory as the basis for a comprehensive leadership training and development program for flight commanders. This chapter then details changes that must be made to enable flight commanders to freely and fully use the leadership techniques and behaviors outlined in Chapter Four. The final part of this chapter outlines an effective method for actually training flight commanders in leadership theory and techniques.

## ACCEPT

OTS should accept the Situational Leadership Theory as the guide for flight commander leadership for two reasons. First, as already pointed out in Chapter One, the leadership of a flight commander is very important in the successful training of OTS students. This fact is even recognized by sources outside of OTS. For example, in Preserving the Lambent Flame, a report for the Airpower Research Institute on military values and the Air Force officer accessions program, Major Richard Stokes observed, "The crux and pivot point of success or failure in the precommissioning programs rests with the officers who present the material.... The newly commissioned officers can hardly be expected to initially reflect a set of values or standards different from those of their teachers" (18:66). In short, flight commander leadership is important! Second, OTS students currently receive instruction in the Situational Leadership Theory as part of the curriculum. In effect, OTS is using the Situational Leadership Theory to teach trainees to be Air Force leaders. With these two facts in mind, the mandate to "practice what you preach" is very clear. Unfortunately though, as previously pointed out, leadership is a very personal and hard to define characteristic. This fact has been part of the reason why flight commander leadership has not been specifically and aggressively addressed in the past. However, with flight commander leadership such an important part of training success, a way to specifically address leadership must be found and implemented. Since situational leadership is already being taught to OTS trainees and is also very applicable to the leadership challenge facing OTS flight commanders,

this theory could effectively serve as the basis for defining and teaching flight commander leadership. Still, given the intense personal nature of leadership, to accept this theory as the guide for flight commander leadership behavior may require the endorsement and direction of the OTS Commander and/or Deputy Commander for Military Training.

## ENABLE

Even with an endorsement from the Commander, several changes must be made in school regulations before flight commanders can fully use the Situational Leadership Theory to guide their leadership behavior. Chapter Four recommended many techniques and behaviors flight commanders can use to actually put situational leadership into practice. However, several of the recommendations are counter to aspects of current school regulations. For flight commanders to feel free to use these recommendations, two OTS regulations must be changed. First, OTSR 50-1 must be changed to allow flight commanders to selectively skip room and security drawer inspections for upperclass students. Second, OTSR 30-1 must be changed to enable flight commanders to direct students to enter or exit their offices at ease. This regulation should also be changed to give flight commanders the discretion to occasionally allow students to remain at ease as the flight commanders enter and exit classrooms between classes. In addition, OTSR 30-1 should allow flight commanders to selectively skip formal classroom opening and closing procedures and personal inspections. Granted, these changes are minor, particularly in light of the fact that many flight commanders are already using techniques that are contrary to school regulations in the ways outlined above. Nevertheless, changing regulations to officially allow flight commanders the freedom to follow the technique and behavior recommendations made in the previous chapter will "legalize" and further endorse the use of the Situational Leadership Theory as a guide for flight commander behavior.

## TEACH

A formal system must be developed to teach and reinforce flight commander leadership. Moreover, this system must receive the same emphasis as other aspects of flight commanders' jobs, such as officiating sports, grading letters and briefings, and teaching and grading drill. In fact, a good system to teach leadership is already in place at OTS; the same system in which flight commanders learn every other aspect of their jobs. This system involves formal instruction in the IQT program and follow-on informal in-service training (IST) sessions held by curriculum area managers (CAMs) before each new block of instruction. For example, while in IQT, new flight commanders receive instruction from the IQT instructor and a

communicative skills (CS) CAM in the techniques and requirements involved in grading letters written by students. In addition, the CS CAM holds ISTs just before students begin to write their practice and graded letter measurements to review and standardize letter grading procedures among the flight commanders carrying flights in a particular class (6:--). So flight commanders not only get instruction in grading letters while in IOT, they also get review sessions each time they carry a flight. Moreover, ISTs are held for almost every major aspect of OTS training: drill, flickerball, one-pitch softball, briefings, the Leadership and Management phase of instruction, etc. An effective system to teach flight commander leadership would be similar to the previous example. Flight commanders should receive instruction in the Situational Leadership Theory from the IOT instructor and one of the Leadership and Management (LM) CAMs. Effective instruction would include information explaining the theory and provide a handbook containing techniques and behaviors to put the theory into actual practice. The OTS faculty development officer can use this report to develop these products. Then, before the start of each 3-week period of OTS training, an LM CAM should hold a leadership IST during which flight commanders review and discuss recommended leadership styles and specific behavior and technique recommendations for each period.

## CONCLUSION

To improve the leadership flight commanders provide their students, OTS must accept, enable, and teach the Situational Leadership Theory as the basis for flight commander leadership behavior. Both during and after IOT, the sharpest focus is on the technical, rather than inspirational aspects of being a flight commander. While technical expertise is undoubtedly a must, it can not stand alone. As General Patton cautioned, "It is the cataclysmic ecstasy of conflict in the flier, not the perfection of his machine gun, which drops the enemy in flaming ruins. Yet volumes are devoted to armament; pages to inspiration" (2:796). While much time and effort is spent at OTS to ready flight commanders to perform the technical aspects of their duties (in this analogy, to give them their armament), not enough effort is expended to give them the ability to inspire their students with strong leadership. The Situational Leadership Theory can help flight commanders inspire students as effectively as they grade letters, inspect rooms, or teach drill.

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